



November december, 1969

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LOUISIANA conservationist

As we move into the months marked by special holidays it might be well to reflect for a moment on what is ahead in November and December. There's Thanksgiving, characterized by the gathering of families and a traditional feast for the fortunate. There is also Christmas, marked by anticipation laced with a warm hustle and bustle found prior to no other holiday. And there is New Year's Eve, a fond farewell to an old year and the start of a new one bulging with challenges.

For Louisiana sportsmen these are the abundant months. There is so much to be done afield or afloat it is sometimes difficult to decide which outdoor activity to pursue.

The hunter must choose the kind of wild game or game birds he will seek. Ahead is what promises to be the greatest deer hunting season in the history of the state. Last year, over 50,000 deer were harvested by big game hunters. It is anticipated that the bag this season will be greater because of increased hunter interest.

There is also abundant squirrel and rabbit hunting. Game birds such as doves, woodcock, snipe and quail will be sought eagerly in the fields and coverts.

Waterfowlers are anticipating the best duck season in recent years. Large scale migrations that have been underway for the past six weeks indicate a massive concentration of ducks in Louisiana during the upcoming duck season.

Adding to the zest of duck hunting will be goose hunting and coot shooting, with a sprinkling of rail shooting for those who have developed interest in gunning the elusive longbilled marsh and rice field birds.

Throw in coon hunting and bobcat hunting with fox hunting and one has more than a dozen

types of hunting that can keep him on the go during those holiday months.

Fishermen are also faced with tempting choices. Bass angling shows a definite upward swing in November and early December before the real cold weather sets in. There are enough productive spots around the state to

white trout, blue fish, redfish and bull croakers. In recent years fishing for pompano has become a traditional fall and winter sport. Schools of those platinum and gold food and game fish congregate around the offshore oil producing platforms, offering the best of sport on light tackle.

This wide variety of outdoor recreation comes at a time of the year when individuals find there are other great demands made on their free time. This buildup in holiday-associated activities continues until New Year's Eve when gala celebrations ring out the old year and usher in the new.

These special months of November and December are also ones for quiet reflection at times. Opportunity for this may come while perched on a cold deer stand, or huddled in a windswept duck blind. It might occur on a solitary wooded trail in search of squirrels. It may be only a fleeting moment of understanding and gratitude.

The New Year will bring with it many problems in wildlife management, many new challenges and added responsibilities. These will be met squarely when they arise. As the year 1970 moves along, we have confidence that we will be in a position to accomplish more, to improve what we have, and to progress.

But these are the harvest months for sportsmen. These are the months to enjoy through utilization the results of wise management of natural resources and wildlife. These are the months that bring the big holidays, special days of thankfulness and religious dedication. They are also the months of fun, joy and companionship.

The members of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission join with me in wishing everyone a warm holiday season. □

Comments



If all the year were playing holidays, To sport would be as tedious as to work...

—Shakespeare

entice fresh water fishermen.

In the coastal parishes, fishermen literally have the book thrown at them. Inland coastal bays, lakes, bayous and oil company canals are filled with prowling redfish, speckled trout, flounder, sheephead and croakers.

Gulf waters offer red snapper fishing and angling for pompano, Spanish mackerel, big winter

LOUISIANA conservationist



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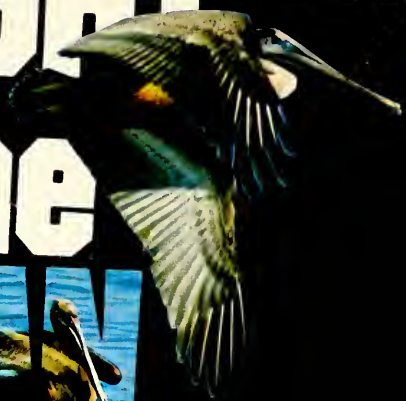
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I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully to defend from waste the natural resources of my country—its soil and minerals, its forests, waters and wildlife.

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The PLIGHT of the PELICAN



DDT
?



Louisiana's unofficial state bird is facing an official crisis!

by Lyn Johnson

The brown pelican is in big trouble. For years the picturesque, sociable bird with the huge bill perched on pilings and preened on the beaches of Louisiana's coastline. He numbered well into the tens of thousands.

The brown pelican became famous, then died.

In early Louisiana history, when some of the first settlers landed on the shores in 1704, a French ship named the Pelican arrived on July 24 carrying a cargo of workers, soldiers and 23 girls sent out to marry the first colonists.

Almost 200 years later, in 1902, Governor William Wright Heard ordered the Secretary of State to adopt the official Great Seal of the State of Louisiana. The directive described the seal as "A Pelican, with its head turned to the left, in a nest with three young; the Pelican, following the tradition, in act of tearing its breast to feed its young; around the edge of the seal to be inscribed 'State of Louisiana'; over the head of the Pelican to be inscribed 'Union, Justice', under the nest of the Pelican to be inscribed 'Confidence'."

Later, in 1912, the Legislature adopted the official state flag—a field of solid blue with the pelican, in white trimmed with gold, feeding its young. The motto, "Union, Justice, and Confidence" is written on a white ribbon beneath the nest.

With all the official glory given the brown pelican, he was never officially recognized as the state bird. The Pelican State simply adopted the pelican as state bird through common consent and usage.

But, the Pelican State's shorelines were void of the swashbuckling pelican. From the mid 1950's to just a few years ago, the only birds spotted along the Gulf were occasional individual visits from small flocks on the Mississippi and Texas coasts.

Biologists from the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission could not give a specific explanation for the pelican's disappearance primarily because the non-game bird was not monitored as closely as hunting birds.

Although there is no detailed proof that pesticides were the main factors in the 100 percent demise of the pelican, the bird's extinction coincided with a large scale fish die-off around the mouth of the Mississippi River due to pesticides.

An investigation of the missing pelican began in 1968 when restocking the bird was part of a cooperative program with southern coastal states.

Fifty young pelicans were brought to Louisiana from Cocoa Beach, Florida, with the help of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission. Half of that group released at the Marine laboratory on Grand Terre survived the winter with just supplementary feedings. The 25 birds in pens at Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, in Cameron Parish, died when taken off the artificial feeding conditions and had to forage for themselves. Indications of high accumulations of pesticides were found plus problems of coping with adverse climatic conditions.

Some months ago, another group of 50 pelicans was imported from Florida, 25 released as free flyers at Grand Terre and 25 housed in enclosures without tops for freedom at Rockefeller to be fed by hand until grown.

Both areas are former marsh homes of the pelican and abound in ideal nesting conditions. As the commission's research project into the life history, reproduction and



Coded leg bands and white patagial wings streamers are the keys to identifying the birds, marking the year of arrival and tracing their movements and life histories.



migratory patterns warrants, more pelicans will be brought into the state.

Each year different leg bands and white patagial wing streamers are attached to the birds to follow and identify the movements of the big-billed birds. Hopefully, the commission's investigation into the case of the vanished pelican will bring out vital information to reestablish the bird in its native state.

But past research has been painfully limited and the future of the pelican in Louisiana, the Pelican State, is a great big question mark.



Alone on the oil-stained beach, the pelican ponders his plight. How long before the beach is empty, and the pelican is only seen on the state seal?



the CHRISTMAS BOUGH

by McFadden Duffy

There are many legends about the mistletoe, but did you know it should be shot down, never cut with a knife?

The hunter sank to one knee and raised the stock of the rifle to his shoulder. Fresh spots of blood showed on the battered game bag slung from his shoulder. The weight of several squirrels gave it a satisfying sag. He laid his cheek against the stock of the rifle, and the cross-hairs inside the scope wavered, then became fixed. The hunter squeezed off a round, and the .22 hollow-point made a spitting sound high up in the old oak tree.

The hunter rose quickly and took several steps forward. There was a broad grin on his face as he peered upward and watched a small bough flutter toward the ground. He reached out and caught it with one hand. It was a yellowish bough with bright-green leaves and pearly white berries. The man snapped a twig from the bough and stuck it in his hunting cap for luck. Then, with his rifle swinging comfortably in one hand and the bough of mistletoe in the other, he made his way out of the forest.

This scene is repeated thousands of times in late November and December throughout the forests of America. In some sections of the country it is customary for the entire families to venture into forests and wood lots in search of mistletoe. They are generally armed with .22 rifles in keeping with deep-rooted tradition that mistletoe may be shot down, but never cut down with a knife or a saw.

The custom of gathering mistletoe had its beginning in ancient Druid rites and Scandinavian mythology. It has survived for generations and is still popular, as traditionally associated with Christmas today as bringing in the Yule log, trimming the tree, hanging the holly, or a search for evergreen boughs to be used in Christmas decoration.

A century and more ago a man named William Hone humorously observed that "girls, although they be ladies, are kissed under the mistletoe." But many people know little about why we kiss and are kissed under this mysterious bough.

Mistletoe became important centuries ago, long before people observed Christmas. It was considered sacred by the Druids, and played an important part in their rites during the winter solstice. As time went by it as credited with qualities of goodness. People believed that it had the power of driving away evil spirits and of bringing happiness. Suspended over a doorway, it protected a home. In Italy and Sweden peasants today share the belief that mistletoe extinguishes fire. They hang branches of oak mistletoe from the ceilings of their homes as protection from fire in particular and harm in general. In many countries of Europe people believe that mistletoe hung in a barn has the power to dispel witches and protect the health of a herd. The bough is widely used as a charm to safeguard dairy herds.

During the centuries that have rolled by, the use of mistletoe in medicinals was often practiced. In certain sections of France, amulets were worn about the neck to ward off

(continued to page 30)

Trappers and marshland operators have waited for more than two decades for nature and the fashion world to fit together the jigsaw puzzle of many delicate combinations necessary for a healthy, robust fur industry. Recent surveys indicate that all conditions are "GO" for the coming season. The weakest link has been manpower—the same as in many other industries.

It is thought that there are enough experienced veteran trappers scattered throughout the state to blaze the trail for a new generation. Methods of trapping and the handling of fur have changed little since the invention of the steel trap by Sewell Newhouse in the mid-1800's. This trade is synonymous with the early exploring, pioneering and settling of America.

Many other eras have taken their place in the limelight since that early period—lumbering, mining, railroading, manufacturing, agriculture and oil—but the total value, the type of equipment and participation in the fur industry has continued more or less on an even keel. The only change occurs in the demand for different types of furs—fluxuating from beaver all the way to ranch mink, back to muskrat, raccoon and, we hope, nutria.

The trapper is still the backbone of the industry and must walk the swamps and marshes, using his know-how and physical strength to bring each pelt to market. The number and total value of pelts marketed in Louisiana last season is not lagging far behind what was called the "good old days", and it appears that this trend will continue.

There is still a good nucleus of experienced marsh operators and trappers who took jobs with major oil companies and other industries during the late 1940's and early 1950's, when the muskrat population was at an all-time low. They are now reaching retirement age, are out of condition, and a little old for the rough and tumble days that they remember in the marshes; but the important thing is that they are knowledgeable of the trapping business.

For instance—how important it is to cultivate three-cornered grass marshes by proper burns and water control; how to adjust traps for best results under different weather and tide changes; and how to examine and apportion suitable lots and set up a trapping outfit in general. This culture is imbedded deeply in the very genes, so to speak, of those that have followed the trade for generations. A sort of natural selection has come about over the years in many of our coastal and swamp families.

Proof of the importance of this kind of know-how was manifested in the fact that the first marshes that returned to production during this present upswing in muskrats were under the strict supervision and control of someone who understood the muskrat trapping business, having experience dating back to the past periods of abundance.

he must walk the marshes

by Ted O'Neil



Uriah Trahan, in the yellow slicker, tutoring his son, Curtis, and two of his friends, Danny and Henry Tingler, in the trapping business in the Johnson Bayou area. Much credit must go to the Louisiana Fur and Wildlife Festival held annually in Cameron for its part in keeping the Fur Industry alive. The enthusiasm generated at this event is partly responsible for there not being an acute shortage of trappers in the Cameron area.

Nutria trapping did bridge a 15-to-20-year gap, and it served to hold a semblance of the fur industry together. However, it actually did very little toward improving muskrat management techniques.

Only the experienced trapper is really aware of what has to be coped with to prevent "eat-outs" from overpopulation. He must know what is going on area-wise and anticipate migrations from surrounding marshes, and must make every effort not to be caught with such a rapid influx of muskrats, which will prevent annual fall burns. The seasoned operator knows that the first time he fails to get a clean burn,





Above: A pair of nutria on their typical make-shift nest.

Muskrat in his favorable habitat—three cornered grass marsh.



good trapping conditions and high production are on the wane in three-cornered grass (*Scirpus olneyi*) marsh. However, some of the oldtimers for some quirk or other could never recognize such basic ecological factors.

During recent marsh and furbearer surveys along the coast, it was discouraging to note that in the short span of two years some of our finest muskrat producing marshes had already been "eaten out" and were on the wane. However, there is still plenty of suitable habitat in the vicinity of these areas that will absorb the migrations.

The challenge of preventing "eaten out" is much greater today than in the past, as there are both muskrat and nutria foraging in the same marshes, competing for the most

desirable food plants and roots. This makes it even a greater task for today's trapper, compared to the periods when there were only muskrats.

An up-to-date vegetative type map covering the Louisiana coast was recently completed as a part of the all-encompassing coastal studies being made in connection with the proposed Mississippi River System-Diversion to Water Deficient Areas. This map was prepared by the Lou-

isiana State University Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit in conjunction with the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. It did not indicate that there were great losses in suitable muskrat and nutria habit since the preparation of the original type map in 1947.

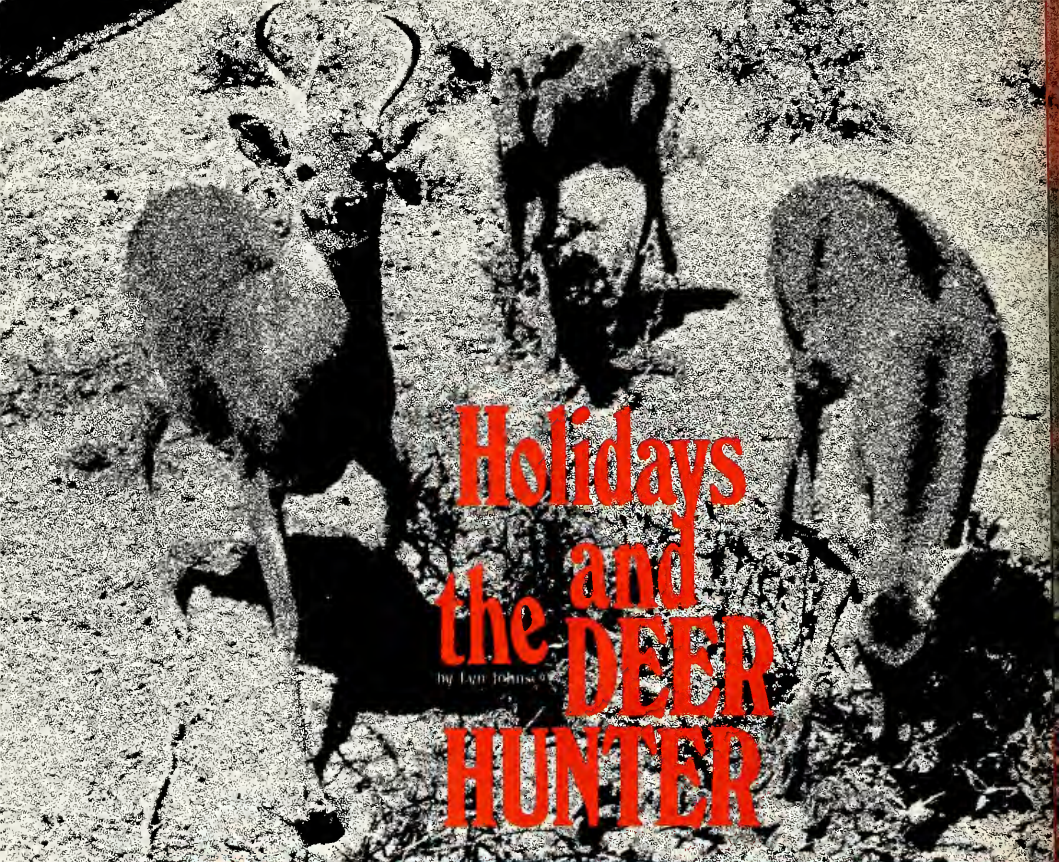
In that industrial activities have been tremendous during these 20 years, these findings were very en-

couraging from the standpoint of the future of the fur industry. It is even possible that oil and transportation activities may have passed a peak during the past 20 years in our coast and could be leveling off, giving rise to stepped-up management pointed toward the improvement of habitat for all types of wildlife and fisheries production. There are many other reasons why we feel that we are on the threshold of a better fur economy for Louisiana. Some are immediate and others are projected over a long range.

Reasons for our present day optimism for the industry are that last season's crop was a good one and it moved. It not only moved domestically, but internationally, being used in Europe, Canada and a few places in the Orient. This gives our fur an extremely broad outlet with obvious advantages. Today's rapid transportation and good communication systems, and resourceful dealers have broadened the trade on one hand and bringing it closer together on the other.

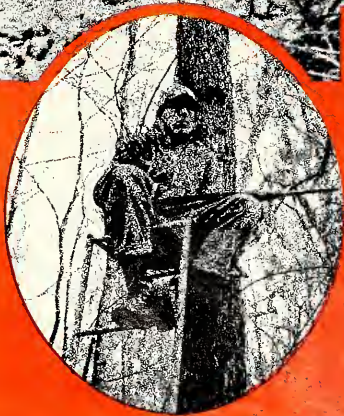
. . . the trapper is still the backbone of the industry . . .





Holidays and the DEER HUNTER

by Lynn Johnson



As the the year moves into its autumnal glory, climaxed by the holiday seasons, one Louisiana's leading outdoor sports takes over the spotlight.

The thrill of deer hunting in the cool, winterish air lured about 140,000 hunters to Louisiana's wooded areas last year. Even more hunters are expected to search for the whitetail deer this year.

It will be a good year for hunting big game. Biologists of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission predict that this season will be as good or better than last year's season, which was the best on record.

The commission's 1968-69 deer kill survey shows that 50,031 deer were bagged. Of that number, 85 percent were bucks and the rest were doe deer. The total marked a 39.6 percent increase over the year before.

The tally of deer hunters increased by 12.6 percent from 1967-68. Last year's total of 139,704 hunters included 138,932 gun hunters; 10,709 bow hunters; and 9,930 gun and bow hunters. The increasing popularity of the sport can be seen in comparative figures. During the 1960-61 season almost

70,000 people hunted deer in Louisiana and they killed about 8,000 deer.

The commission's restocking program over the years has augmented the population of deer and brought out thousands of hunters. The number of successful hunters increased to nearly 25 percent of the total with 24.2 average efforts per kill. The statistics also show that 14.1 percent of the hunters bagged one deer; 5.3 percent bagged two deer; 2.3 percent bagged three deer; 0.6 percent bagged four; and 0.6 percent bagged five deer.

Hunter success on a par, or better than last year is written on the wind for this season throughout the state. The only exception is in the devastated delta region of Plaquemines Parish, caused by Hurricane Camille.

The rest of Louisiana's deer population is in good shape. For specific descriptions and regulations in various areas, the hunter should obtain a copy of the commission's hunting and fishing pamphlet.

Spending holidays in the wooded Louisiana lands is a thrill beyond compare for hunters of all ages. Last year the deer hunters spent a total of 1,210,192 days in the fields and forests, an average of eight days for each hunter.

A crisp chill nips the air in the early morning haze. The forest's golden glow declares that autumn is here and winter is not far away. Adding more colors to the changing seasons are the brilliant hues of hunting jackets, vests and caps.

If the hunter is standing or stalking, he must know the habits of deer in order to bring home venison for the table.

Always on the lookout for trouble, the wary deer's acute sense of smell is his best faculty, combined with excellent hearing. The colorblind deer has trouble detecting stationary objects, but the slightest movement will trigger an escape flight. Although swift of foot, the deer would rather hide than run and he can completely camouflage himself in the smallest cover.



The hunter is on the deer's terrain. The animal knows his territory and is on a continual watch for danger. Movement should be kept at a minimum, and silent and slow when necessary.

Constant vigilance is the watchword on a still-hunt through the piney woods or on a frosty deer stand waiting for the deer to pass by, chased by bugling hounds.

Whether the deer hunter is armed with a gun or a bow and arrow, silence, alertness, patience and a good knowledge of the deer are the keys to bagging a trophy buck on a holiday.



Capella gallinago

(COMMON SNIPE)

by Charles R. Shaw

Illustrated by John P. O'Neill



This member of the shore bird group with the long bill and erratic flight has long been a favorite with the sportsmen who find its rapid zig-zag course a challenge. Formerly known as Wilson's Snipe or the jacksnipe this bird differs only slightly from the closely related European Snipe.

The Snipe along with the Woodcock is a member of the Sandpiper family. It is slimmer than the latter and has long pointed wings and the short tail is an orange-red in color and these characteristics along with the striped dark colored head and back and lighter underparts serve to identify it.

The coloration serves to camouflage the bird quite well and it is so hard to spot on the ground when motionless that often it is not seen until it springs into the air uttering its characteristic rasping call notes.

The Snipe is locally common in Louisiana from fall through spring especially in the southern portion of the state. It should be looked for in the marshes, wet pastures, old rice fields, and similar areas, where it may sometimes be found feeding during the day in contrast to the more nocturnal feeding habits

of its relative the somewhat larger Woodcock.

Earthworms seem to constitute an important item of diet along with the larvae of various types of aquatic insects. Also included on the menu are snails and various small crustacea, grasshoppers, crickets, locusts, leeches, beetles, and various types of larvae as well as some seeds of marsh plants.

After migrating to their nesting grounds the Snipe puts on quite a show, flying in high, wide circles and producing strange hooting sounds which may be caused by the rushing of air through the outspread tail feathers according to some authorities. This peculiar noise has been variously described as "bleating", "hooting" and "winnowing" by those studying the courtship of this bird.

The nest is quite well built for a shore bird, being generally constructed of grass with a lining of finer material of similar nature. It may be located in or under a clump of grass, usually close to water, and may or may not be under a small bush or other vegetation. In some cases it may actually be built in clumps of vegetation out over the water.

The eggs, usually four to a clutch, are generally of a light brownish color with darker brown spots more or less evenly distributed over the surface. There may be considerable variation both in the ground color and the darker spots.

Both male and female parents share in the incubation duties which last some eighteen to twenty days. The downy young are beautifully marked, being dark brown and black with a pattern of cream-colored and buffy spots arranged in a pattern which not only is pleasing to look at in the hand but provides protective coloration when the little bird is in its natural habitat. These strong and active young leave the nest shortly after hatching and can either run or swim as the occasion demands, easily and effectively concealing themselves in the marsh vegetation when threatened. It is practically impossible to distinguish these young birds when concealed so well that the color pattern blends in to the surroundings. The parents look after their young for some time after they leave the nest although the precocious little fellows seem almost active and self-sufficient enough to be on their own.

One Louisiana hunter is supposed to have shot over 78,000 snipe in his lifetime. This was back in the period before the turn of the century, when all types of migratory birds were plentiful. Later the population decreased to such an extent that the season was closed for a number of years. However our sportsmen are once again able to harvest a small proportion of these elusive migrants without endangering the future of the species and a new generation of hunters is being indoctrinated into the enjoyment of an old sport. □

CHRISTMAS



All recipes tested in the kitchen of Mary Land. Recipes are those of Mary Land and cook, LueVester Demery.



There are no monotonous days in the Louisiana calendar.

IN LOUISIANA

Besides official holidays there is always a special "jour de fête" in the making for Louisiana folk. These informal festivities begin in the Spring with crayfish boils and the winter season opens with hog killing or a boucherie. And in both country and city "the carnival" is observed as is the more important festival of Christmas. Preparations for Christmas and the holiday season begin in the Spring and Summer with the preserving of jams, jellies and relishes. One can almost guess the month by looking at the Tutti Frutti jar in the making. At this time vegetables and fruits are canned for future table use. Later in the season pumpkins and cushaw are put away for holiday dishes, and nuts are gathered and stored. Before Thanksgiving the ducks, geese, and turkeys must be fattened and the daube glacé may be made and frozen for use through Mardi Gras. The boudin rouge and boudin blanc have already been made as has the sausage for Christmas baskets. Mincemeat jars are now filled and the Christmas pudding is boiled. Cooks and family are now baking cakes and cookies for the big day is near. But "la Famille" must not become too weary for on January the sixth is Los Reyes Magos, Epiphany or the twelve days after Christmas which is the beginning of the Carnival season. Louisiana is never without gaiety and ceremony—and parties. During the holidays of Christmas there are veilles, soirées, collations, chocolatières and the more formal réveillon or midnight supper which is served especially on Christmas and New Year's eves. Refreshments for the midnight repast include galantines, daube glacé, jellied fowl and fish, chafing dishes, salads, cakes and custards. The festive potables for these occasions are wine and champagne. Pastries and beignets are served usually for a morning collation and more elaborate cakes and petit fours are customary with the chocolate for a chocolatière. Soirées and the earlier in the evening veille call for an assortment of drinks and sandwiches or other light refreshments. For amusement there is dancing, card playing and the exchange of news and a bit of gossip. Through the years customs and cuisine have changed little in Louisiana. The abundance of the foods from sea and shore remains. The French Market in New Orleans displays the same vegetables and fruits it did a hundred years ago. Today an entrée may be embellished by a more glamorous garniture, but it is the same basic food, cooked in the same way. The old time hot, mulled rum may have been

replaced by Antoine's Louisiana Lullaby but it is still rum—the favorite drink of the first settlers in New Orleans. Louisiana is getting a little older but her homes and heart are open as always. Around the Christmas table the same Santé and Salud is sung out as in years past and the toast of George Washington "To All Our Friends" is never forgotten.



SHRIMP REMOULADE

Boil two and one half pounds of washed shrimp in water seasoned with one large sliced onion, two cut up lemons, one package crab boil, salt and Tabasco. Boil fifteen or twenty minutes. Drain, peel and devein.

Make a sauce of:

Twelve tablespoons olive oil
Four tablespoons vinegar
Two teaspoons dry mustard
Two teaspoons dry horse radish
Two tablespoons Durkees dressing
Salt and pepper to taste

Mix sauce well and marinate shrimp in sauce for several hours in refrigerator. Serve on chopped lettuce, garnished with sliced cucumbers.

A YOUNG TURKEY HEN

After turkey is dressed, rub with butter. Stuff your bird with a rice or corn bread stuffing. Roast a three pound turkey for one hour and twenty minutes in

a closed roaster basting often with apple juice, salt and white pepper. When almost ready to serve add a dozen balls of *beurre manié* (small balls of rolled flour and butter) to thicken the sauce. Take top off roaster and let turkey brown. Serve garnished with preserved crab apples.

A BRACE OF GADWALLS

(The Gadwall or Grey duck is called Canard Gris in Louisiana)

After your ducks are cleaned and picked rub outside with lemon and stuff with onion and celery overnight in the refrigerator. When ready to cook remove stuffing. Pour lemon juice and red wine into duck cavity. Rub outside of duck with butter and stuff ducks with orange segments and pecans.

Roast in a preheated oven two hours at four hundred degrees, basting often with a liquid of chicken stock or bouillon. Garnish with sliced oranges.

ORANGE-CRANBERRY SAUCE

Mix one large can cranberries with one jar orange marmalade. Simmer a few minutes. Cool and add 2 tablespoons Kijata wine. Serve hot or cold with turkey or game.

CAJUN CASSOULET

Place in a baking dish two cans red beans, dash of Tabasco, salt, two tablespoons cane syrup and one tablespoon butter. Sprinkle top with imitation bacon bits or bacon bits. Bake in oven.

THE PEACEMAKER

As the Christmas holidays are a time for revelry it is said that in the olden days a husband was known to revel until the morning hours and in order to be welcome at home he brought home a hot oyster loaf which served as a "peacemaker."

To make a loaf fry a dozen oysters. Drain. Hollow out part of one half

of loaf of bread, cut lengthwise. Heat bread and pour melted butter on inside of loaf. Place oysters in hollow part and sprinkle with minced parsley or shallots. Place top on loaf and serve.

A Mediterranean version of the loaf is the Pan Bagna. The loaf is prepared the same way. Butter is not used but sliced tomatoes and bits of black olives are sautéed in olive oil. Spread this on the loaf and place anchovies over it.

TUTTI FRUTTI

This delicious mixture of fruit may be used to top ice cream, in small pies or many other ways.

In a crock or large apothecary jar

ORANGE PRALINES

Four cups white sugar
One cup frozen (diluted) orange juice or fresh juice
Coconut (grated)

Method:

Let ingredients simmer over a slow fire at least forty minutes, until a ball may be formed by dropping into cold water. Drop by a large spoon onto a buttered cookie sheet. Sprinkle coconut over pralines while they are still hot.

SYLLABUB

Syllabub is a traditional Christmas dessert or drink. It may be served in Pots d'Crème cups or other cups.

minutes. Mix butter, eggs, Snowdrift and sugar and beat. Add two cups sweet milk. Gradually add two cups of flour at the time. Pour into greased layer cake pans. Bake thirty minutes in 350 degree oven.

ICING

Two cups sugar
Two cups powdered sugar
Six egg whites

Method:

Let sugar simmer into a syrup. Beat whites of eggs until stiff. Add egg whites to syrup. Pour icing between layers and on top of cake. Sprinkle with the coconut.



place one layer of strawberries when they ripen. Over this place a layer of sugar. Leave overnight to draw out the juice. Pour in one bottle of good brandy. As various fruits ripen add the fruit in a layer and two cups of sugar. This will go on until Fall. When the last fruit is in the jar leave the jar closed tight for six weeks. If there is too much liquid, pour off some of it. Canned fruit may be used instead of fresh fruit.

DIRTY RICE

Mince fine one and one half cups of mixed celery, onion and bell pepper. Sauté this in a small amount of butter in a skillet for a few minutes. In another skillet slowly brown two tablespoons of flour, watching and stirring constantly. Boil two cups of rice in two cups of water for fifteen minutes or use instant rice. Mix all ingredients and add one-cup cut up giblets. Season with salt and pepper. Run in the oven long enough to brown.

Mix together three cups whipped cream, one cup sugar, one cup sherry. Beat well in an electric or hand beater. Pour into cups and garnish with nutmeg.

PUNCH ROYAL

Pour into a punch bowl two fifths imported champagne and one cup Curacao. Add red and green cherries and a block of ice. Serve at once.

GATEAU LUEVESTER

Six eggs
Two cups shredded fresh coconut or one box shredded coconut
One stick butter
One small can Snowdrift
One box cake flour or six cups flour
Three cups sugar
Two cups sweet milk

Method:

The secret of this cake is to beat the ingredients in a bowl with a wooden spoon for a long time—at least thirty

Editor's Note—It is a privilege to have Louisiana's own Mary Land of Natchitoches provide the traditional Christmas Recipes for the *Louisiana Conservationist*. Poet, song writer, historian, hunter, painter, conservationist, musician—Mary Land is perhaps best known today for having preserved the culinary traditions of Louisiana and New Orleans. *Louisiana Cookery*, published in 1955 by the Louisiana State University Press, was but a prelude to *New Orleans Cuisine*, published this year by A. S. Barnes and Company, South Brunswick and New York; Thomas Yoseloff Limited, London. No other writer has been able to recapture the old Louisiana as it is preserved today in recipes that are traced with the mingled flavors that are unique in the world today.



Along the northern coast of the Gulf of Mexico, from Florida to Texas, floundering at night is traditionally a summer sport. It may be more comfortable to wade the grassy bordered sand flats of coastal bays on a warm night when cooling breezes blow, but research shows success isn't dependent on tradition.

by Lawrence S. Fox

Flounders

A paper, *Feeding Habits of the Southern Flounder in Barataria Bay, Louisiana*, is being published in the *Proceedings of the Louisiana Academy of Sciences*. It is technical and reprints will be made available upon request. The study was paid for in part by the Commission and the United States Department of Interior, Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, under Public Law 88-309.

The research data was collected in Barataria Bay, made famous by the pirate-patriot Jean Lafitte who used its connecting waterways to smuggle booty into New Orleans.

Flounders were collected using trawls, rod and reel, and gig with



lantern. The gig and lantern was used more often as it was found to be the most effective gear with which to capture flounders.

The flounder lies flat on the bottom, partly buried in the sand or mud. The instinctive concealment of the flounder is often so well accomplished that it is quite hard to detect even when keeping a sharp lookout in fairly clear water.

The southern flounder was found to be highly predatory, its feeding habits changing with seasonal availability. In order of preference, its food was found to be primarily juvenile mullets, fat sleepers, an-

the Year-Round

chovies, shrimp, crab, and small croakers.

It waits until some prey passes by and then strikes with swiftness and force. Sometimes it will pursue schools of small fish to the very surface.

Essentially, flounders are present in Louisiana's coastal waters throughout the year. If you like flounders as much as this writer does and you don't mind getting a little cold, then the fall and winter are fine for floundering too. They're there for the taking.



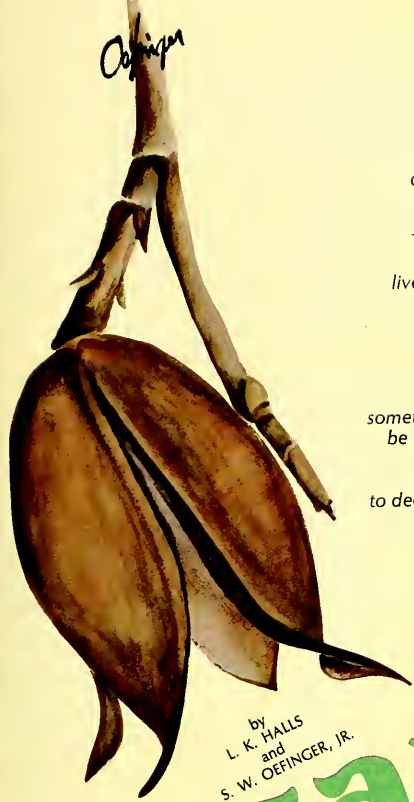
As winter approaches and wildlife food becomes scarce, palatable evergreen leaves of Carolina Jessamine, *Gelsemium sempervirens* (L.), become important in the diet of white-tailed deer.

Deer nibble this climbing vine sparingly during spring and summer. But in the late fall, when many plants have shed their leaves, Carolina jessamine becomes a favorite food. It is especially valuable if acorns and other mast are scarce. Studies in a pine-hardwood forest in east Texas showed that jessamine only made up about 12 percent of the total green browse available to deer during summer and early fall. By winter the figure had increased to 50 to 75 percent.

The growth habits of Carolina jessamine add to its attractiveness as a deer food plant. Though most common along stream bottoms, jessamine is found on nearly all but the driest soils throughout southern forests from Virginia to Mexico. While yields are best in the open, it grows well beneath trees, thus having a good yield potential on lands devoted primarily to timber production. Suppressed plants in dense woods respond quickly when timber is cut or thinned.

Jessamine may climb to 20 feet or more in trees, but it is often available to deer in loose mats near the ground. Its yield and quality are improved by occasional prescribed burning, but frequent burns may cause permanent damage. The large, yellow, funnel-shaped flowers appear in the late winter and early spring, long before most other flowers are blooming.

Carolina



Aside from the fragrant flowers, its milkless stems and narrow, lance-shaped, shiny, smooth leaves easily distinguish Carolina jessamine from starjasmine (*Trachelospermum difforme* (Walt.) Gray), and Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica* Thunb.).

The plants contain alkaloids related to strychnine, and for this reason are poisonous to humans and all classes of livestock. Loss of livestock, though rare, usually occurs in the winter. People have reportedly been poisoned by sucking nectar from the flowers and by eating honey made from jessamine nectar. Apparently deer are not affected by eating normal amounts.

In spite of being potentially poisonous, yellow jessamine is sometimes used as an ornamental in the yard. Stem cuttings can be rooted most any time of the year and the vines quickly cover a trellis or fence.

The fruit of Carolina jessamine, a capsule, is of little value to deer, but bobwhite quail eat the seeds. Tangles of vines around low shrubs and fence rows also provide quail with excellent cover.

by
L. K. HALLS
and
S. W. OEFINGER, JR.

Jessamine

The authors are on the staff of the Wildlife Habitat and Silviculture Laboratory, which is maintained at Nacogdoches, Texas, by the Southern Forest Experiment Station, USDA Forest Service, in cooperation with Stephen F. Austin State University.

Louisiana has a fall and winter wonderland that many upland gunners along the eastern seaboard would give anything to possess. But they can't. This upland bird bonanza is one of the blessings that nature has bestowed upon Louisiana alone.

It is estimated that approximately 80 percent of the continental population of woodcock winter in Louisiana during season. For the dedicated woodcock hunter this means that Louisiana is a legendary, fabulous woodcock wonderland. But it is neglected by the majority of hunters.

In certain areas of the state it is possible to walk up enough woodcock to fill out the generous bag limit of five daily. This calls for being able to read woodcock sign and locate likely woodcock cover. Possession limit is 10 and the season extends from November 27 through January 30.

The nocturnal feeder has several characteristics that make locating it easier for the hunter. A woodcock's diet consists of earthworms. It may feed slightly on other matter but the mainstay of the diet is worms—the garden variety.

Woodcock also favor fairly thick cover such as evergreens and some types of sparse woods. It follows that they will be found in such cover near a good source of earthworms.

Hunting woodcock calls for use of a dog. Pointing dogs are good when trained on woodcock and many quail hunters accidentally bag woodcock when their bird dogs locate the longbilled upland game birds. Spaniels are also well suited to woodcock hunting, but most spaniel breeds will flush woodcock immediately and must be trained to hunt close to the gun.

In dense cover most woodcock hunters fasten silver bells around the necks of their dogs so that will be able to locate the position of the dogs as they search out loafing woodcock. Bells are particularly recommended for spaniels because of their habit of flushing birds as soon as they locate them.

It is a matter of record that more woodcock have been banded in Louisiana than in all other woodcock banding operations in the country. This is done at night with the aid of a headlight and long handled net. The exact count of banded woodcock is not available, but is in excess of 10,000 birds.

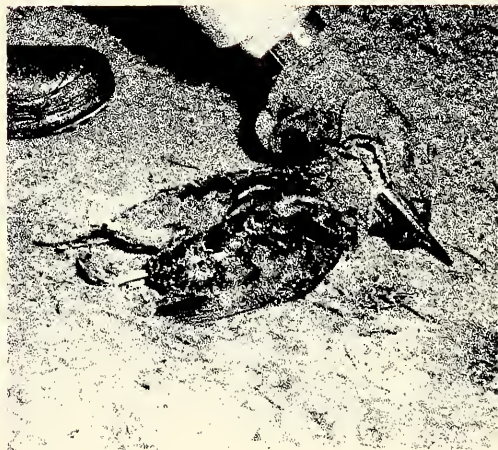
Woodcock hunting in Louisiana is on a par with quail hunting as far as pleasure afield goes, although it does not attract the number of hunters as does the popular Bob-White quail. There is no particular reason for this lack of interest. Woodcock offer excellent gunning. When the birds are flushed, they rise with whistling wings and bore away with a twisting, sometimes erratic flight pattern that calls for snap shooting.

A trifle larger and heavier than quail, the appeal of woodcock on the table has drawn the highest praise from devotees of this form of upland gunning.

Louisiana has a lion's share of one of the country's most prized upland game birds. They're wintering in this woodcock wonderland in season. About all that bird hunters need is a liberal education in the sport that offers so much satisfaction. When properly introduced, they will become woodcock fans for life. □

by McFadden Duffy

WOODCOCK



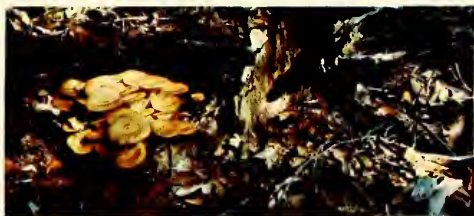
WONDERLAND



November in br



moments of fall . . .



Fleeting





Q and

of men, dogs

T

he days of countless thousands of small-acreage sharecroppers' farms, fringed with honeysuckle hedgerows and blackberry brier patches, have virtually vanished from the American scene. Such places are becoming increasingly difficult to find in the deep South.

It was near those small, weathered wooden homes that folks referred to the Bob-White quail as "partridges." The birds are better known as quail, but when hunters talk about going "bird hunting" there is seldom reason to doubt they're after the cheery little whistler considered the prince of game birds.

You are certain to hear that this prince is lord over a diminishing domain. Land-use changes have greatly reduced the number of quail. Habitat formerly conducive to big coveys has been destroyed. Clean farms that sprawl over thousands of acres have replaced the sharecroppers.

If the future of quail hunting is uncertain, the end of quail hunting is not in sight . . . yet.

That is proved by statistics from the last small game survey conducted by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission's Fish and Game Division.

The survey showed that during the 1967-1968 hunting season there were approximately 35,674 quail hunters. Those hunters spent about 271,759 days roaming the fields and pine-crested, gently rolling hills, following their bird dogs over an estimated 6,468,048 miles.

These dedicated quail hunters bagged an estimated 635,732 quail. While it is true that quail are not as plentiful as in years gone by, well in excess of a half-million quail is a good harvest for just over 35,000 hunters whose efforts afield may have ranged from a single trip to perhaps 20 during the season.

It is assumed that the number of quail hunters during the 1968-1969 season was about the same and the overall bag possibly slightly higher. The next small game survey will be conducted at the conclusion of the 1969-1970 hunting season.

This will reveal if the number of quail hunters remains static, or if the downward trend continues. It will also supply information about the season bag of Bob-White quail as compared to the 1967-1968 season.

Statistics are interesting but are a poor way of measuring the keen sport that goes into seeking out fine game birds that individually add up to less than a few ounces of flesh

by McFadden Duffy

whirring wings

and feathers. To be sure, quail are hard to beat when it comes to table fare; but the serving of quail is only paying final homage to a noble game bird.

The real enjoyment comes in hunting quail. It is a companionable day afield and brings about the ultimate in coordination between highly trained dogs and hunters. There's something about following far-ranging pointers or setters on horseback, afoot, or in four-wheel-drive vehicles that gets into a man's blood.

The dogs work the area methodically, casting for scent as they race from spot to spot. Full appreciation for generations of breeding comes when a dog winds birds and points. With foot cocked and muscles quivering, the dog freezes.

If the quail are nailed down tight, it's up to the hunters to move in and flush them. This is when the covey literally explodes and quail rise with whirring wings that shatter the stillness of a moment that can never be forgotten or erased from memory.

Watching one dog "honor" the find of another is part of the keen enjoyment. This teamwork is inherent in blooded quail dogs. Add a brisk autumn wind, the friendly creak of worn saddles, plenty of good conversation about dogs, guns and quail; and you have the prime ingredients for an unforgettable day afield. That's quail hunting in Louisiana today.

There isn't a bird hunter alive who doesn't hope there will always be some of it left.





sickness. Rings of mistletoe were worn in Sweden for the same reason. Monkish herbalists named it *lignum sanctae crucis*, the wood of the sacred cross. They maintained that the Cross of Calvary was made of mistletoe wood.

The ancient herbalists liberally prescribed its use as an antidote for all poisons and as a remedy for epilepsy. This belief is widespread. Mistletoe attaches itself so firmly to a tree that it cannot be blown down. Consequently it was believed that an epileptic patient could not fall down in a fit as long as he carried mistletoe in his pocket.

The popular custom of kissing beneath the mistletoe probably springs from Scandinavian mythology. According to an old myth, the Scandinavian equivalent of Apollo was wounded by a mistletoe dart launched by an evil spirit. He lingered between life and death for three days. The white berries are said to represent the tears of his mother. So great was his mother's joy at his recovery that she decreed that mistletoe could never again serve as an instrument of harm. As Goddess of Love and Beauty she is said to bestow a kiss upon anyone who passes under overhanging mistletoe.

From this quaint myth came the custom of kissing under the twig. Under the chandeliers and doorways of Christendom pretty girls can expect to be kissed. In some countries it is customary for the girl to remove a white berry after she is kissed. When all the berries are gone, the twig loses its spell and no more kissing is allowed.

From these legends and customs, mistletoe emerged as a symbol of peace. In centuries gone by, if enemies met by chance in a forest beneath a tree bearing mistletoe, they laid aside their arms and observed a truce for the day.

The popular belief that mistletoe must not be cut down in an ordinary way, but should be shot down or knocked down with stones and caught before it touches the ground, stems from the ancient Druid rites. Because of its many sacred qualities, the Druids made quite a rite out of gathering mistletoe. A great festival was held five days before the new moon of the winter solstice. Men, women and children marched deep into the forest until the procession reached an oak tree that was heavy with the sacred evergreen. The Arch-Druid climbed the tree to the lowest branch on which mistletoe grew. He used a golden sickle to sever the branches, and he caught them in the folds of his flowing robe. When he descended, he broke the branches into sprigs and passed them around to the villagers.

The present-day custom of hunters tucking twigs of mistletoe in their caps for luck also stems from ancient practices. Heroic Norsemen often gave their swords the name of *Mistelsteinn*, so strong was their confidence in the spell of the sacred bough.

Frequent references to mistletoe as the golden bough result from the color of the twigs that carry the foliage and berries. This is particularly noticeable on winter-naked trees. The bright-yellow wood and the yellowing of the leaves after mistletoe is plucked make it indeed a golden bough.

From a purely botanical point of view, mistletoe is a parasitic plant that develops through a series of feeders, or suckers, which it sends into a tree. It is not unusual to see great oaks stunted by leeching clusters of mistletoe. It is widely spread by birds. They cache the berries in the fork of trees.

With many of us in the United States, the legends of mistletoe are unknown or being fast forgotten. But it's a safe bet that the tiny evergreen sprigs with their white berries will continue to be an important part of Christmas and that pretty girls caught under the mistletoe are going to be kissed for many years to come.



